MORE THOUGHTS ON THE WAR

BY

A. CLUTTON-BROCK

FROM THE TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT

METHUEN & CO. LTD. LONDON

ONE SHILLING NET

A 000 060 912 3

UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY

MORE THOUGHTS ON THE WAR

By the same Author
Uniform with this Volume

THOUGHTS ON THE WAR

SHELLEY: THE MAN AND POET

MORE THOUGHTS ON THE WAR

BY

A. CLUTTON-BROCK

FROM THE TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT

SECOND EDITION

METHUEN & CO. LTD.
36 ESSEX STREET W.C.
LONDON

First Published *April 8th, 1915*

PREFACE

IN most of these papers I have tried to escape from moods into thought ; but they were written in different moods which have, perhaps, made some of the thoughts inconsistent with each other. We are all more subject to moods now, and they change more violently, than in time of peace. So, if I affected a complete consistency, I should be writing as if I were not myself but some very superior person whose moods, since he would not exist, could not interest any one. Still, I have made the effort to escape from mere moods into thought. I have even tried to understand the Kaiser, though I cannot pretend to have written about him without malice. The Prelude to these papers appeared in the *Times* on Christmas Eve. It was written for that occasion ; but even occasional pieces, now, may have some historical interest ; and it foreshadowed that

2223177

wonderful truce which I speak of in the article called "Christians, Awake!" That and all the other articles appeared in the Literary Supplement of the *Times*, and I have to thank the Editor of the *Times* for allowing me to republish them.

A. CLUTTON-BROCK

February 25, 1915.

CONTENTS

PAGE

PREFACE V

PROLOGUE I

I

ENGLAND 7

II

THE NEW FATALISM 15

III

ON FALSE DOCTRINE 23

IV

THE KAISER 32

V

ON FREEDOM 41

VI

WAR AND RELIGION 50

VII

CHRISTIANS, AWAKE! 59

VIII

ON NATIONAL MOODS 67

IX

MOURNERS AND THE DEAD 77

MORE THOUGHTS ON THE WAR

PROLOGUE

CHRISTMAS 1914

NOTHING would be easier than to talk of the mockery of Christmas this year ; and the usual merrymaking would be a mockery for all except the thoughtless or the heartless. But the hope and promise of Christmas, peace on earth and good will towards men—is that also a mockery which brings us the bitterness of despair at the moment when we should be rejoicing? Is this Christmas only an incongruous reminder of the contrast between what we are doing and what we have professed and hoped? To those who have put all their trust in civilization perhaps it is ; but Christmas would never have lasted through the centuries, with its repetition of the same desire so often disappointed, if it had needed a proof of the

growing wisdom and righteousness of men. It and its faith survived the dark ages when none can have believed that wisdom and righteousness were growing; and, if they could not survive now, it would be because we had faith in nothing outside ourselves. But this peace on earth, of which we dream at Christmas, is a peace that men never have known and never can know in their imperfect mortal hearts. It is something that we ourselves, as we are, cannot accomplish; and yet, if we ceased to dream of it, we should fall into a despairing hatred of ourselves and each other. We are what we are because of our desire for what is not; all that exists, in ourselves and outside us, stirs us with a finer image of itself; and Christmas is the festival of these finer images, when we try, as it were, to take a breathing space among all the shortcomings of reality and to see ourselves and all the world as we and they would wish to be.

It matters not whether these shortcomings are less or greater one year than another. The desire of men's hearts does not wait upon results, and they do not love less the peace that is not because of the war that is. Rather they are more passionately aware of what that peace might be; and if in

times of prosperity and quiet routine they have lost the sharpness of desire and the glory of their dream, it comes back to them more keen and more vivid because of its contrast with reality. The music is very far off, yet it can be clearly heard ; and because it is so far off we know that it is not our own music, but sent to our minds by a power as far beyond all our discordant noises as the stars are above the mist. There is an old carol with the burden " All bells of Paradise, I hear them a-ring " ; and this Christmas, more than any other, it is well that we should listen for the bells of Paradise, and not despair because our own seem to ring so forlornly in the night. It may be that the bells of Belgium will be silent. Some of those famous and musical carillons are broken, with their high towers that were built to remind men of the City of God in their busy and populous plain. Certainly there will be no merrymaking in Belgium ; but perhaps that people, because of their suffering and their bravery, will hear the bells of Paradise more clearly than ever before ; and they will not be mocked by the sound. For them the dark ages have returned suddenly in the midst of their modern security and innocent peace. To

them we dare not offer any commonplace of human comfort. They are thrown back upon the last resources of the human spirit, like many of our own people who have lost what no victory on earth can recall for them. But the spirit has its resources—a hope that is not for to-day or to-morrow, a joy that rises from the very fount of grief; and Christmas, surviving ages of evil, returns to us now, in this last disappointment, to prove it.

And our enemies? Christmas is their festival as well as ours. We cannot expect that they will love us for that day, or that we shall love them. We are told to love our enemies, but not to pretend that we love them when we do not. But we can, for the moment, forget them and all our thoughts against them, and believe that they are forgetting us and their own hostile thoughts. Let us not tell ourselves that they are unworthy to hear the bells of Paradise, or that there can be no far desire and dream in their arrogant minds. No man is unworthy to hear those bells or unvisited by far desires and dreams. We and they at least can look away from each other towards the same visionary hope. And we know that they, like us, will be thinking of their fathers and

brothers and sons whom they will miss from the Christmas feast. We shall all be sharers in the same grief, whatever incompatibility of earthly hopes there may be between us, and in the same natural affections. The hatreds, the evil hopes, the evil deeds of war, are unnatural and transitory ; what lasts and what is natural to the soul of man is the good hope and the love that he desires even when he cannot feel it. And this again is proved by the soldiers who do not hate their enemies, when they see them face to face. Their minds turn with a beautiful relief from the artificial hostility of war to a natural friendliness. They seize any pretext they can find for a holiday of peace. And we, now that we have the pretext of this chief of all holy days, can think more of them than of our enemies ; we can think of the peace which they are fighting, quietly and without hatred, to give us ; and beyond that we can think of the high unearthly peace, rung by the bells of Paradise, which our enemies, because they are men, desire like ourselves.

I

ENGLAND

THE members of an English family are apt not only to see each other's faults, but to speak of them before strangers, so that a stranger unused to this habit might think that they had no love for each other. They themselves take their love for granted, and do not care what strangers may think about it. And as it is with the family so it is with the country. A stranger comes among us, and we tell him all that we dislike about England. We have no domestic caution or sense of propriety in this matter. We point out to him how badly things are managed here, and speak of England as if it were an inefficient railway on which we have the misfortune to travel. And he, if he happens to be an industrious German, takes notes of all our complaints for future patriotic use. He thinks that they are dragged out of us by our unwilling sense of

German superiority. He, even if he comes to England for his pleasure, is always a traveller for his country ; and in England he is aware of no country, but only of a general discontent and indiscipline and disorder. There are Englishmen, he notes, but no England ; nothing but a crowd of individuals who do not even pretend to think well of each other, and who would surely be happier and better men under German rule.

In Germany patriotism, like everything else, is organized. It is one of those emotions which Germans experience at the word of command. But here there is no word of command, and we are not good at expressing our patriotism. We have our conscious patriots, but they are amateurish ; and most of us either dislike their demonstrations or watch them indifferently as if they were the ceremonies of some fanatical religious sect. They have a right to demonstrate, of course, like any one else, but we wish that they would do it better and would not pay compliments to England that make us feel ashamed. We prefer them, indeed, when they show their patriotism by grumbling collectively as we all grumble individually, when they tell us, as a nation, that we ought to be ashamed of ourselves. There we agree

with them. Every institution in England, including the country, ought to be ashamed of itself, and every one who says so has our sympathy. We are always aware that institutions consist of human beings. The country itself consists of them, and we cannot separate it from them, from the Englishmen whom we meet in the street and the train, and who are obviously very imperfect creatures like ourselves. To the German Deutschland is something that does not consist of Germans. It is over all, over the Germans as well as every one else. It is an abstraction that can do no wrong, and of which it were blasphemy to speak ill. Whatever the Germans do collectively is done by Deutschland, and therefore justifies itself. But to us, whatever England does collectively is done by Englishmen, who are rather more apt to make fools of themselves together than separately. We are incapable of country-worship because it would mean to us the worshipping of each other and we would rather be godless altogether than do that.

That is why foreigners have often called our national policy egotistical. We ourselves know that it is the policy of Englishmen, not of an English god, and we cannot persuade ourselves, or any one else, that we

have forgotten ourselves in country-worship. And that is also the reason why, as a country, we are called hypocritical. Because the nation, for us, consists of ourselves, we try to justify it morally. If it were an idol to us, we should not need to justify it. Whatever it did would be right as a matter of course, even if it violated a neutrality it was sworn to preserve. But there is an advantage in this desire to justify, though it sometimes leads to hypocrisy and makes us unpleasant to ourselves and to other nations. For national hypocrisy, unlike country-worship, has its limits. There is a point at which you can no longer persuade yourself that you are doing right when you are doing wrong. But since Deutschland can do no wrong, the Germans, being idolaters instead of hypocrites, never reach that point.

England is a country as much criticized by other nations as by herself. Every one tells us our faults ; but about Germany there has long been a curious silence. The Germans themselves have proclaimed her beauty and strength and virtue ; and the rest of the world has left them alone with her, for one does not argue with worshippers about the merits of their god. True, there has been a little unrest among their subject peoples,

to whom Germany means Germans, just as England means Englishmen to us, and who find it as impossible to worship Germany as to worship Germans. We also have subject peoples; and they do not worship England any more than we worship her ourselves. Indeed they grumble at her as we do, and we find no more blasphemy in their grumbling than in our own. But they are also as ready to fight for her as we are; and this fact surprises the Germans, who believed—on the evidence of those industrious notes of theirs—that we were not even ourselves ready to fight for her. They came to England and found no idol there like their own Deutschland; and they made a note that England did not exist. Perhaps we deceived them by our talk of the British Empire. In their sense of the word there is no British Empire, even in India. For an Empire to them means a State in which the rulers enjoy ruling because the subjects dislike being ruled. It means the imposition of an idolatry upon unwilling worshippers. But we have no idolatry to impose, only a government which we know is imperfect as we ourselves are imperfect, and we wish we could make it better. So do our subject peoples; but they will fight for it against

the Germans because they do not wish to be ruled for the honour and glory of Deutschland ; and this is a fact which the Germans cannot understand, as James, Duke of York, did not understand that no one would kill his brother Charles to make him King.

One is inclined to wonder whether the Germans worship their abstract Deutschland so hard that they have no energy left to love the real Germany ; whether indeed it exists for them at all except as a means of performing the will of that abstraction. But there is no doubt that for us the real England does eixst, and that we love it all the more because we have not forgotten it to go and worship an idol. It means for us people and concrete things, and a past and a future of people and concrete things. We know it so well that we are always a little astonished at what it has done, as people are surprised by genius when it appears in their own family. It is a little land, as Morris said, " little rivers, little plains, swelling, speedily-changing uplands, all beset with handsome orderly trees ; little hills, little mountains, netted over with the walls of sheep walks. All is little, yet not foolish and blank, but serious rather, and abundant of meaning for such as choose to seek it ; it

is neither prison nor palace, but a decent home." These are quiet words, but they mean more love than they say. For all of us now this little land is full of meaning, and we seem to each other to be all of one family in our ancient home that is neither prison nor palace. We are men fighting, or ready to fight, for no idol that sanctifies even her own crimes, but for the English of the future who will do better, we hope, than we have done, and make this home of ours fairer than we have made it ; and besides that we fight for certain things that seem good to us, as kindliness, freedom, and good faith. They are modest virtues, not fit for a towering idol, but men cannot be happy without them. They are not always our virtues, but we wish that they were, and we listen to no professors who tell us that they are vices. We have been at ease in our home for so long that we did not know how much we loved it until it was threatened ; and now we are surprised by our own passion and by the speaking beauty of our countryside and the grey churches in it and the villages that seem to trust so quietly in our defence of them. And we are surprised, too, by the new glory of our arms rivalling the old. Men have walked

our streets who can fight like their forefathers of Agincourt and Waterloo. We still make history, and it is not imposed upon us by these masters of the new science and the old barbarism. The world and the laws of the world have not utterly changed while we slept in our island. Idols are idols still, whatever jargon be used in the worship of them ; and when an idol falls there is emptiness in earth and heaven for its worshippers. But we, like our fathers, are not idolaters ; and we love England the more because we love her this side of idolatry.

II

THE NEW FATALISM

HERR FRIEDRICH NAUMANN, who is described as a German radical of high character and some international reputation, has provided the Germans with a new formula to justify their violation of the neutrality of Belgium. No State, he says, has the right to stand aside from a historical process of reconstruction. Wars, nowadays, are changes of organization in the process of human evolution. Since some States fall and some rise, there are days of reckoning when the shares in the central government of the world are settled afresh. One of these days of reckoning has now come, and this war is a struggle for the leadership of mankind in which no State has a right to remain aloof from the general process of centralization.

This formula must be comforting to a German so long as he is able, in the quiet

of the study or the lecture-room, to think of life only in terms of forces and tendencies and not of men and women. Germany is a superior force, Belgium an inferior ; and the collision between them may be observed as calmly as a collision of two stars. Certainly the German professor, at the present moment, has more leisure for historical theory than the Belgian refugee ; but the refugee might complain that he himself, as a fact, is left out of the theory. Or he might point out that Herr Naumann, because there still remains in his mind some faint remembrance of the Belgian refugee as a human being, has fallen into a little inconsistency. He talks of rights —no State has the right to stand aside from the historical process of reconstruction ; and " one cannot in principle admit their right to stand aside." But if these processes occur and are to be observed thus calmly, why does the observer make use of irrelevant moral terms like right and principle? No astronomer says that a large star has a right to destroy or absorb a small one ; nor does he ask himself whether he can, in principle, admit the right of the small star to stand aside from any general process of centralization. He observes certain material changes, and makes no comment upon them to imply that

he himself has any emotional concern with them whatever.

But Herr Naumann, though he too writes as if he were an observer of purely material changes, does, by his use of those words right and principle, imply that he has an emotional concern with them. The Belgians, perhaps, are merely matter to him ; but the Germans are not, in that they need to convince themselves of their moral right to assert their material superiority. And this means of course that, unlike the stars, they, and the Belgians also, have a choice. There is a factor in these historical processes of reconstruction which is not to be found in the collisions of the stars ; and Herr Naumann acknowledges it when he tries to persuade his countrymen that they have done no wrong to Belgium. He, in fact, tries to make the best of two theories of life. Because he believes the Germans are the strongest nation, he presents the war as a conscienceless struggle of material forces ; and then he tells them that, because it is a conscienceless struggle, they can be of a good conscience.

But, if you are to keep your intellectual integrity, you cannot thus eat your cake and have it. You cannot draw moral comfort

from the fact that you recognize no moral forces. It may be that, if Germany were now as Belgium is, Herr Naumann would pity himself and the other Germans, and would ask for the pity of the world ; and, in his talk of rights and principles, he seems to be keeping open, as it were, a loophole to the right of pity for himself and for his country. No man, and no nation, ever feels quite secure ; and, however much it may suit us to talk in terms of matter about our enemies, we remain to ourselves men with a human uncertainty of fate and a human capacity for suffering. What Germany has done to Belgium is part of a general process of centralization in the leadership of humanity ; but how would it be if that process caused the same things to be done to Germany, or if the Germans found that they had been mistaken all the time about the nature of the process, that it was not centralization but decentralization that was happening in this war, and that they had the misfortune to represent the wrong tendency ?

The language of Herr Naumann is scientific, but by what scientific observations has he discovered that his theory is true, that this process of decentralization is indeed

taking place? All he knows is that his own country wishes it and wishes to be the centre. Whether it will succeed or not depends upon its strength. Therefore his theory amounts only to this—that Germany is strong enough to impose her will upon the world and means to do so. The scientific language is used only to convince himself and other Germans that there is some kind of natural rightness in this German will, that all the forces of the universe are working with it, and that it must therefore prevail and produce the tranquillity of a stable equilibrium when it has prevailed.

Here we are trying to use Herr Naumann's own jargon ; but we have heard arguments like his, in another jargon, often before. Where he talks about general processes of centralization, others have talked about God's will ; and they have found, in their own material strength, a proof that God was with them. There are some Germans who still prefer the older jargon ; but, with all their difference of language, the Kaiser and Herr Naumann are alike in their fatalism, so long as fate seems to be on their side ; and Herr Naumann knows what is the historical process as surely as the Kaiser knows what is the will of God. That is their superiority,

and the general German superiority, over the rest of us. Whatever is, is right ; and the Germans, whether they are scientific or religious, know what is. We other ignorant nations are fighting against the will of God or the historical process of centralization ; but, by whatever name you call it, it justifies the Germans in all that they do. But there too we are slipping into the inconsistencies of Herr Naumann. Why *justifies*? These things happen ; they are part of the historical process or the will of God, and in either case irresistible. Why, therefore, all this talk for and against them, unless that is also part of the historical process or the will of God?

But there is another doctrine—having at least the advantage that it does not reduce all our arguments and emotions to an absurdity—which tells us that we are not to see the will of God in everything that happens, but to look for it by the light of our own souls. It tells us that the will of God does not reveal itself through success or failure, but through the consciences of those who would rather obey it than their own animal desires. The Germans wished to violate the neutrality of Belgium, and they have used their reason as a means of justify-

ing what they wanted to do. But, according to this other doctrine, reason should be used as a means of discovering what it is right to do ; and when it is used otherwise it ceases to be reason. So the theory of Herr Naumann is irrational, because it is a theory made to suit present German circumstances, and one which only a German could make. We may be sure, too, that Herr Naumann himself would cease to believe in it if the German power were broken. His mind would then busy itself in finding reasons why the Allies should not treat Germany as Germany has treated Belgium. His appeal would be made at once to the other doctrine and to the consciences of those who look for the will of God by the light of their own souls. He would, in fact, ask for mercy, which, according to his present doctrine, is a mere obstruction to the fulfilment of the historical process. And, we hope and believe, he and all his misguided nation would receive it, and will receive it in due time. For, if we now are fighting against the German doctrine and for the other, we must not use the German doctrine against the Germans in the hour of triumph. The essence of our doctrine is that, through failure and success, it remains the same—

right is right and wrong is wrong, whoever does it. That is the meaning of the words "Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord; I will repay." If men take vengeance, they themselves commit the crimes for which they take it, and in their material victory suffer a moral defeat. It is by means of sophistry that the Germans have trained themselves not to pity Belgium; but that sophistry will fail them when they need to ask pity for themselves; and then will be the time for us to prove that our doctrine is not also a sophistry changing with our animal desires. Nothing but disaster will cure Germany of her false doctrine. She has put it to the test of war, and it is a doctrine that must stand or fall by that test. If she is beaten, her gods are beaten with her and her right becomes wrong. But ours, as we know, cannot be changed by the issue.

III

ON FALSE DOCTRINE

THE aim of principle is to give the mind predominance over the instincts of the body, not over one instinct in favour of another, but over all alike: and principles have been established by men, and passionately guarded by them, because they wish to attain to freedom of the spirit by a governance of all their instincts. Through principle they assert their desire for this freedom, as a democracy asserts its desire for freedom through its constitution; and principle is made supreme, as the constitution is made supreme, to express the supremacy of that desire for spiritual freedom.

When the spirit is free in men, they can work in harmony together to fulfil the desires of the spirit, which are common to all and arouse no conflicts among them; and so the essence of a principle, which asserts the desire for freedom, is that a man will apply

it to others as well as to himself. What is right or wrong for him is right or wrong for them ; and no urgency of his own instincts will make that seem right in himself which he sees to be wrong in others. Indeed, the whole conception of right and wrong, with all the emotions attached to it, is a conception of principle and arises from the desire for spiritual freedom. Right is right and wrong wrong to us because we see them as right and wrong for others besides ourselves. A man may have his own individual conception of right and wrong, and so far he may be a law to himself ; but he must apply the law to others as well as to himself, or it is no law at all.

Of course no principle by which we rule ourselves is absolutely right. At best it is the best we can attain to ; and we must change it for a better if we can find one. It often happens, too, that human principles favour one instinct at the expense of the rest, giving to that favoured instinct the supremacy which it is the function of principle to give only to the spirit ; and in that case principle becomes the agent of tyranny rather than of freedom. And principle may be so misused that men forget its very aim and origin and yet obey it slavishly because

it gives glory and power to some one instinct which they wish to satisfy. They do not believe in spirit at all, but only in this instinct which they allow to dominate all their other instincts. And because the predominance of this instinct is a principle with them, it has a spiritual prestige among them and seems to them morally right. They could not have the conception of principle at all if others had not attained to it in their efforts after spiritual freedom, but they borrow it and misapply it to make themselves the slaves of an instinct.

That is what Prussia has done ever since she was first perverted by the success of Frederick the Great. No nation has ever disciplined itself more completely, but the discipline is not a discipline of the flesh by the spirit. It is a discipline which aims at the supremacy of one instinct over all the rest. This instinct is national rather than individual ; but, for all that, it is bodily, like the collective instinct of bees or ants. Like those insects, the individual Prussian will live laborious days, not that his spirit may be free, but that Prussia may conquer. Yet by a curious mental trick, since his predominant instinct is collective, he is able to invest the satisfying of it with all those

emotional values that belong properly to the freedom of the spirit. He professes, like all the rest of us, to believe in right and wrong; but his right is the success of Prussia, and his wrong her failure; and so what is right, when done by Prussia, is wrong when done by other nations. And his principle only applies to Prussia and not to other nations, because its aim is the predominance of the hive instinct and not spiritual freedom. He desires a concord for Prussia, but, since it is an animal concord, he does not wish it to spread beyond Prussia. And yet this animal concord has for him the value of a spiritual concord, which it could not have if other men had not passionately desired spiritual concord.

No doubt Englishmen and Frenchmen are apt to be misled by their hive instincts. But it is possible to show them that they are misled, because they believe, as a general principle, that what is right or wrong for one nation is right or wrong for another. But the Prussians do not believe that. They believe that Prussian success is right because Prussian predominance is good, as others believe that the freedom of the spirit is good. And Prussians themselves are born good because they are born Prussians. They

have a doctrine of race, which is really a doctrine of predestination, since it means that a Teuton is born to salvation, and of all Teutons the most entirely saved are the Prussians. So they are often religious, for they cannot but admire a God who has predestined them to salvation and created a universe in which all that Prussia does is right. But this religion of theirs, like their principle, aims at the predominance of their national instinct, and the emotions attached to it could not exist if they had not been developed by another religion that is not concerned for the success of Prussia or any other nation and does not maintain that one race is damned or another saved. The Prussian, in fact, profits nationally by all past efforts after spiritual freedom. He uses the language, enjoys the emotions, attains to the discipline, and exercises the convinced power, of the spiritually free. He is, to himself, a good man, when the whole civilized world is appalled by his collective misdoings, when, if all mankind had always acted as he acts, the idea of goodness would never have been born in the mind of man.

It is a remarkable achievement, so remarkable that the whole of philosophic Germany has imitated it, and all the Germans are

labouring to change themselves from men into an intelligent and formidable race of ants or bees. They talk of their *Kultur* as ants might talk of the custom of their nest, and they are trying to hate us as one nest of ants might hate another for their smell. They have not entirely succeeded yet, because most Germans of the south are naturally kindly and have a long effort after spiritual freedom behind them. But, if they can, they will turn all the romance with which that effort has enriched their minds into this animal passion of hatred ; and so they write Hymns of Hatred, which, if only they knew it, are a contradiction in terms ; for hymns, and their music, belong to love, while hatred expresses itself in animal and unmusical snarling. So to the rest of the world there is a surprising absurdity in their use of all the riches of their past spiritual freedom, of their poetry and philosophy and religion, to adorn their present spiritual slavery. There is an intellectual and æsthetic, as well as a moral, incongruity in them, which makes us laugh in the midst of our horror as if they were savages dancing a war dance in the dress of civilization. They are still aware that other nations exist and have the old ideas of right and wrong ; but

they have no notion how their own words and actions will affect these other nations, and they produce the worst effect upon them when they are trying to produce the best.

And that happens because for them only one nation has a right to exist; and this idea of a national monopoly of right implies and produces an utter confusion of mind in them. They, for instance, have a right to "expand" at our expense; but, if we do not wait for our turn, we are treacherous. It is their business to make history, ours only to suffer it when made. And when they talk to each other in their books and speeches of their national destiny and what it implies for us, they take it for granted that we are not listening or thinking at all of our own. We are decadent and passive, and it is merely sinful in us to attempt to prove that we are not by taking action. And yet they themselves may prove that they are not decadent by their actions; and in them it is no sin, but the idealism of Germany asserting itself. That is their word for every gratification of the German national instinct; but in other nations they call it treachery or vanity or barbarism, according as the nation is English or French or Russian.

The intellectual result of this state of mind

is their diplomacy, which leaves them without a friend because friendship to them means an acknowledgment of Germany's right to do what she pleases. The moral result is that under the permanent tyranny of their national instinct they commit crimes such as no other Europeans would commit in the momentary indulgence of an instinct. A man who is at the mercy of all his instincts is subject to the better as well as the worse. A reaction of pity comes to him after cruelty, and he suffers remorse because he has enjoyed outrage. But the German soldier is taught by his false doctrine to harden himself against pity as against fear; and so strong is his discipline that he will weep over his own brutalities and yet continue them while he weeps. So a soft-hearted inquisitor may have wept over the torture and reproached himself for his weakness while he did so.

But we must not tell ourselves that the Germans are not human. They are men as we are, and a few decades of false doctrine have made them capable of these crimes—the false doctrine that sets an instinct upon the throne of the spirit. The moral of it all is, therefore, that we must keep a sharp watch upon our own doctrines and test them all by asking whether they aim at freedom

of the spirit or at the predominance of some one instinct over all the rest. Above all, we must accept no doctrine because we think that it is for the good of the nation, or of a class, or of any body of us, to accept it. When men think in herds, it is always an instinct that controls their thinking and deflects it from the pursuit of truth ; and the worst danger of civilization, as the Germans are proving now, is that it may make thought itself instinctive and reason only a means of justifying the workings of the predominant instinct. When this happens, there is no check upon the crimes which that instinct urges men to commit. The individual and the State attain to a unity, but it is the unity of animals, not that concord which is foreshadowed in the very discords of a free man or a free people.

IV

THE KAISER

BEFORE the war we had all grown used to the Kaiser, and no longer feared that he would set the world on fire. He was the figure-head of the German Empire, half Siegfried, half journalist ; and the mixture amused us, seeming, in its incongruity, characteristic of German taste. And now that war is come he is hero to the Germans and villain to a great part of the rest of the world. English children, ever since the Boer War, when they made snow-men have called them "Kroojers." This winter they are calling them "Kaysers," and may continue to do so for a generation. Suddenly the Kaiser is to the English people what "Boney" was to their forefathers ; and old gentlemen talk after dinner of how he ought to be punished, just as they used to talk of Napoleon. They suppose that he himself feels villainous inside and enjoys it ; and

yet he is still, what he was before the war, the same incongruous mixture of Siegfried and journalist, with the same serious unconsciousness of his own incongruity.

The Germans have always been a comic people, and their Kaiser now, on this tragic stage, is more a figure of comedy than ever. To them it seems merely vulgar insolence that we should think or feel this. Their enemies are to them all melodramatic villains, and they would think better of us if we cursed their Kaiser than if we laughed at him. But laughter is more humane than curses, and in this case it shows more understanding. Besides, one can turn easily from laughter to pity, but not from curses ; and before the war is over pity may be needed.

The incongruity of the Kaiser is the incongruity of modern Germany, which is as modern as you please, eager for every new theory and invention, but all the while dreaming of its Teutonic ancestors in their primeval German forests, and believing that the victory of Arminius over the Romans has given it some kind of hereditary and divine right to conquer all the Latin peoples. And so their Kaiser, no less eagerly modern, believes in his own divine right as chieftain

of those Teutonic hordes. He, with his Staff, throws back to Charlemagne and his paladins rather than to Arminius, because Charlemagne was a Christian and a Holy Roman Emperor, and the Kaiser, if not Roman, is certainly holy. On that point he has no doubt ; but, to do him justice, he regards himself as officially rather than as personally holy. Indeed, he is a comic figure because, to himself, he is officially everything and personally nothing ; officially religious, romantic, modern, terrible—in fact, all the different things which Germany believes itself to be.

He painted a picture and was then officially an artist, as became the Emperor of a defiantly artistic people. He composed a march and was officially a musician, as became the head of the most musical nation. And so he is officially a War Lord, the over-chieftain of all the Teutonic warriors ; and he can, at any moment, talk like some one in a Wagner libretto about mailed fists and shining armour and what not. The Germans see no incongruity in this because they too can, whenever it suits them, think of themselves as rushing out of their virgin forests upon the corrupt and effete Latins. In these moods they forget all about Berlin, which

is not at all like a virgin forest, and Potsdam, which is not the mountain home of a Wagnerian hero; and then the mood changes, and they are the guardians of culture against the Slavonic hordes. It all depends upon whether they look east or west; past and future both give them a divine right to do as they please; and it is the divine right of their Kaiser to be what he pleases.

He feels, no doubt, that he is the fiftieth Emperor from Charlemagne instead of the second from William of Prussia; and he talks as if Frederick the Great were one of his half-legendary Imperial predecessors. But Frederick did not think about Arminius or Charlemagne or his Teutonic ancestors; he thought about himself, and Prussia was to him what he could make it at the expense of his neighbours. Germany, now that she is an empire, cannot satisfy her romantic soul with Prussian cynicism, although she has accepted the Prussian political morality; and so she has produced a romantic Hohenzollern, for whom the doctrine of Frederick has clothed itself in Wagnerian language and the atheism of Frederick has become Biblical.

But if the ghost of Frederick smiles at his

successor as a hypocrite, it does him an injustice. The Kaiser is too completely official to be a hypocrite, and the nation he represents is not hypocritical. A hypocrite is one who pretends to a morality that is not his ; but the German national morality is just what it professes to be ; the only wonder is that they can feel romantic over it. But they can do this through their power of seeing themselves as they are not in a world that is not. So, when the Kaiser told his troops to behave in China as if they were the Huns of Attila, he saw himself as the Scourge of God, forgetting, of course, that Attila's god, theologically at least, was not his. He was in the mood to be splendidly barbaric ; and all Germany, including unfortunately the German Army, felt splendidly barbaric at his word. They forgot all about their culture and the cold judgment that the civilized world would pass upon them as a nation professing to be civilized and Christian. They were disposed to be Huns, and they acted accordingly. But through all their romantic moods neither they nor their Emperor have ever forgotten the Prussian doctrine. So when he talks of his mailed fist he means machine-guns and howitzers and magazine rifles ; and religion remains to him a

materialist belief in the survival of the fittest, which is always Germany. His God is as obsolete as his mailed fist, as a matter of fact ; but both prevent him and his people from feeling raw and lonely in their materialism. It is as if you built a gaol to look like a Norman castle, so that you might forget that it was a gaol.

A poet might make an epic about Attila, not merely because he lived long ago but also because there was no incongruity in him. But only a German could make an epic about the Kaiser, for he is epical to himself, and the man who is epical to himself is comic to others. There is always an incongruity between his idea of himself and the fact. So the Kaiser is self-conscious, but of a self that does not exist ; whatever he says and does provokes one to think of the reality that he simulates. When he paints a picture one thinks of a real artist, and when he prays one thinks of real religion.

It has been said that Nature imitates art, and the Kaiser has really succeeded in becoming a work of German art. A photograph of him looks as if it were taken from a portrait by a German painter ; and in public he talks habitually in German saga-

language, uttering platitudes in that operatic jargon, wearing the winged helmet and waving the glittering sword of opera, so that one forgets, or did forget, that he is a real Emperor at whose command real soldiers march and real blood is shed. But now he has succeeded in causing the smile to fade from the face of Europe ; and now, if we can get beyond calling him a bloodthirsty villain, we may wonder what the real man is thinking or feeling behind all those parts that he plays so dutifully. The worst of it is that he still goes on playing them with the same frivolous earnestness that amused us when he was only a War Lord at peace. We hear of him inspecting his troops and hailed with Hochs from Ten Thousand Soldier-throats. We read the messages he sends to German princes, still in the Wagner-libretto jargon, and the messages he addresses to his God, still in the same jargon ; and we wonder whether anything will turn him from a bad work of art back into a human being. Count von Moltke has been talking to an interviewer of the burden of responsibility which the Kaiser felt when the moment came for him to pledge his people's blood. But the very phrase sounds as if it were the Kaiser's own ; and still we wonder whether

he felt the responsibility, or only saw himself as the War Lord feeling it.

Without his consent the war could not have been ; but did he give it as an actor or as a man? Did he himself will anything or realize anything except that the time had come for him to play the greatest part of his life? We must do him justice and admit that for many years he preferred peace to war. Then, we are told, his mind changed and he became warlike ; but why? Was the change in him, or only in the mood of his people, which imposed a new part upon him? Now, at any rate, he is playing that part with all his old facile unreality ; but the contrast between that and the realities becomes more and more glaring. He makes the old tawdry speeches ; but there are the lengthening casualty lists, and the fresh drafts of Germans too young and too old to fight, and the ring of the Allies and the blockading fleets. He is still master of the ceremonies, but events are unceremonious and master him. He wears all the uniforms of a conqueror, but they do not make him one, any more than paint and brushes made him an artist. Will he ever know himself well enough to make the one excuse that can be made for him—namely, that he was the

Emperor of a people that wished him to overdo his part, and that he overdid it until he himself and the world believed that he was a cause when he was only an effect.

V

ON FREEDOM

FREEDOM could not be the sacred word it is if it meant only the power of any individual to do what he likes. Man had this before he became a social being at all, and he loses it as soon as he becomes one. There remains in him always the desire to do what he likes ; but it is not sacred to him. He may like it in himself, but he does not like it in others ; and only those things are sacred to us which we like in others as well as in ourselves. So freedom is sacred to us, not because of our individual desire to be free, but only when we wish others to be free, when we would have our freedom as a part and necessary condition of theirs. The man who has a passionate love of freedom is, in that, like the man who has a passionate love of goodness ; he is aware of it more in others than in himself. It is more beautiful to him and more delightful when

he beholds it than when he possesses it. That is why men will give up their own freedom and be commanded like slaves when they fight for freedom's sake. They know that they may die at the word of command and never enjoy the freedom they fight for. But it is the state of freedom, the relation of freedom, that they prize ; a society in which no man puts any constraint upon another, not one in which every man struggles to do what he likes.

This fact is not understood by the statesmen and philosophers who have sneered at freedom and called it the sacred right of every man to do as he chooses. No man who, when he speaks of freedom, is thinking only of his own can know what freedom is ; for it is not attained to through the conflict of individuals, each trying to do what he likes. That way leads to anarchy and through it to tyranny. It is only attained to when men wish each other to be free, when the state of freedom seems to them glorious because it is reached by yielding rather than by assertion. But there are many who profess a love of freedom and yet are not pleased when they see it in others who seem to them ignorant and foolish. They do not love it enough to put up with its

very obvious drawbacks ; and when they see some nation growing strong because it has forgone freedom they believe that it would be patriotism in their own country to forgo it with the same object. Often they are so used to freedom that they do not value what it gives them ; but they do value what the surrender of it has given to a rival nation ; and they hope, no doubt, to eat their cake and have it ; to surrender freedom for the sake of power and yet not to miss it.

If a nation has the will to be free, it must make some sacrifice of power to freedom ; and, if it has the will to power, it must make a contrary sacrifice. We see that at once in an army, in which, as it is an instrument of power, freedom must be sacrificed to power. No soldier expects freedom or enjoys the spectacle of it in other soldiers. He does not take a walk, but marches and executes every movement at the word of command ; and, if he is a good soldier, he takes a pleasure in doing this, in company with other soldiers, swiftly and precisely, because he feels himself to be part of this instrument of power, through which the will of the nation is expressed. This must be so in the army of the freest nation on earth fighting for its freedom. Every citizen in

that army submits himself to discipline, although in civil life he would resent such a discipline as contrary to the freedom for which he fights.

But where in a nation the will to power is predominant, the nation itself becomes the instrument of its own power ; and for the sake of power it will forgo freedom and submit to discipline, like an army. Since it does this of its own free will it may still call itself a free nation. But you are not free if you have forgone freedom, however willingly, for something else. Power you may gain, because you have sacrificed so much to it ; but you cannot retain what you have sacrificed. Least of all can you enjoy the state of freedom in others when there is no state of freedom to be enjoyed. When the citizens of a free country become soldiers they surrender their freedom as soldiers, because they wish to keep it as citizens ; and they distinguish clearly between the discipline of the army and the freedom of the State. But in a nation possessed by the will to power the army is the pattern for the State, to which, in the matter of discipline, it must conform as closely as the weaknesses of human nature will permit. The whole moral effort of that people is

to limit freedom for the sake of power ; and, even if there is no single tyrant and the rulers themselves submit to discipline as obediently as the ruled, still the nation is its own tyrant and has lost freedom for the sake of its own power.

That is the state of the Germans, and they are content with it ; nor should we have a right to complain of their contentment if they were also content with the freedom of other nations. But power is nothing to those who desire it above all things, unless they can exercise it ; and they must exercise it upon others. This German people, possessed by the will to power for which they have sacrificed so much, cannot feel that their sacrifice was worth making for the mere sense of power. There comes a moment when the discipline so long endured must be put to the proof, so that it may win that glory and profit for which it was undergone. That is the danger of the nation which forgoes freedom for power. Its army is not to it a safeguard, but a means of realizing its power ; and, even while it remains at peace, it thinks of peace, not as a common duty of the nations, but as a forbearance of its own. Further, it grudges to other nations the freedom which they

enjoy because they have not sacrificed it to power; it may even hate them for their freedom as a sign of weakness and selfishness, and may wish to snatch from them their own possessions so that they may pay the deserved penalty of their vices. If a free nation prospers, its prosperity proves that the nation which has sacrificed freedom for power has made its sacrifice in vain. Hence, perhaps, the present German hatred of us. They want to prove their own rightness at our expense, for that is the only way in which they can prove it. They represent one principle in Europe and we another; and, even among those who had a humane dread of war, there was an expectation of the day on which the two principles should be tested against each other.

But a nation with the will to be free has no desire thus to put its principle to the test. It can be free within its own borders; and freedom, unlike power, can be enjoyed without rivalry or conflict. A nation possessed by the will to power does not wish other nations to be powerful; but a nation with the will to be free rejoices in the freedom of other nations, and, the freer it is, the less will it wish to impose its will upon them. For the desire for freedom is based upon a

belief about the nature and destiny of man, without which freedom becomes a mere word of rhetoric ; the belief that it is every man's business in this life to think what he himself holds to be true and to do what he himself holds to be right, and that, unless he does this, he is not performing his function as a man at all. You may overawe his mind so that he believes what is true, and you may constrain his will so that he does what is right ; but in that case he is a well-trained domestic animal, not a man. He remains a means and never becomes an end in himself. In this world, because of the struggle for life, we are all means in the civilized organization of that struggle ; but, while we have the will to be free, we are not content that any man should be that and nothing more. Rather all our necessary subordination is a condition imposed upon us through which we can attain to moral and intellectual freedom. Every man, rich or poor, gentle or simple, wise or foolish, is a Phœbus with Admetus on this earth ; who must not, in the needs of the struggle for life, forget his own divinity, who must remain, himself, the ultimate judge of what to him is right and true. He may make many mistakes ; but it is better that he

should make them than that, for the fear of making them, he should cease to be a man and become only an instrument.

> If we are lost, no victor else has destroyed us ;
> It is by ourselves we go down to eternal night.

The man to whom freedom is sacred believes that about himself and about every one else ; but a nation possessed by the will to power is afraid of the thought, and would put the nation and its history in the place of the individual man and the illimitable future of his soul. If every man, it believes, will surrender his judgment to the nation, then all individual destinies may be pooled in the destiny of the nation ; and if the nation triumphs through their surrender, then every member of it will win the ultimate triumph and be secure from the ultimate defeat. And that is why Germany rushes into war, since the ultimate triumph can only be won in war ; and why she thinks of Berlin, wreathed and flagged for the entry of her victorious armies, as if it would be the new Jerusalem. But it would not, even for the Germans ; again there would be the need of another triumph to compensate them for their great surrender. And each time the

triumph would be harder as the world became more and more aware of the danger threatened to it by the German will to power. And so, sooner or later, there must come, not triumph, but defeat ; and after that no future for a nation possessed by the will to power, no hope except in the discovery by each individual German that he is, after all, a man with his own sense of truth and right, and not merely an item of a defeated nation.

VI

WAR AND RELIGION

CHRISTIANITY separated Religion from Patriotism for every nation which became, and which remained, Christian. It is possible, of course, for a nation to make of its religion an accessory to its patriotism ; but, when it does that, the religion ceases to be Christian, whatever its dogmas and ritual may be. This has happened again and again, and happens still ; but the other nations do not recognize the Christianity of the nation to which it happens. We may call on our own God for victory, but we know that when the Kaiser calls upon his, he is not calling upon ours. There is a reversion from the world-religion to the tribal fetish, to that more primitive state in which every nation had its own God who fought for it with other national Gods, and shared the glory of its triumph and the shame of its defeat.

This conception of a God we have outgrown in quiet times, but at war we are apt to fall back into it. It has even been reported that the Kaiser speaks of his good German God, as other Germans speak of their good German conscience. We do not go so far as that ; but, if we do not wish to become ridiculous as well as blasphemous, we too must be on our guard against such relapses, and we must ask our Bishops and clergy to help us in the difficult task of remaining intellectually, as well as morally, Christian. We say intellectually, because Christianity is a religion which appeals to the intelligence, and which ceases to be Christian when it ceases to be intelligent no less than when it ceases to be moral.

The essence of Christianity, as of all pure religion, is detachment, which is an intellectual as well as a moral virtue. It is a religion which refuses to be used for our own personal advancement, insisting that, when we use it so, it is no longer a religion at all. According to the Christian doctrine a man cannot know the meaning of religion unless he cares for something not himself more than he cares for himself ; and in himself is included his own well-being in this

world or in any other. He that would save his soul shall lose it ; for if your main object is to make your soul comfortable, you treat it as if it were a body, and that is to lose it indeed. Now it is true that when you care for your country you are not caring for yourself ; but religion demands more detachment of you than that. You care for your country because it is *your* country. You may out of love of country do noble things ; but, if you have religion, you will care for something above country, for something which is neither you nor yours, which has no connexion with your own welfare or pride, and which your enemies can care for as much as you yourself. " The poet hath said, 'Dear city of Cecrops.' But I will say, 'Dear city of God.' " There the Emperor, who was an ordinary man, was by his goodness inspired to make one of the great sayings of the world. The city of God was not his city as the city of Cecrops was the city of the Athenians, and he could share his love of it with his enemies, because it was not his city or theirs, but for both something seen and desired from far off.

It is well to fight for your country and to die for it, but not to worship it. If you have a religion at all—and every man has

some, whether he knows it or not—it is a danger to you and a false guide unless you purify the essence of it from all self-love. The religious emotion is for that which is not yourself, for that which would be unmoved and unchanged if you were not ; and you must not feel it for country, or for father or mother, or wife or children. All of those are imperfect like yourself, and to think them perfect because they are yours is half way to thinking yourself perfect. It is to fall into a delusion dangerous to yourself and to them ; dangerous to the world, when a whole nation falls into it and believes that in fighting for itself it is fighting for God.

Your country may be right in its war ; but you must not believe it right because it is your country, still less must you go farther and think it right to believe your country right in all cases. To do that is to turn patriotism into religion again ; it is better to say that you will support your country right or wrong, so that it may triumph, and you with it. Then at least you are frankly animal and suffer no confusion of thought ; nor do you misuse the religious emotion. But in the other case you use the religious emotion to glorify the animal in

yourself, and in doing that you pervert your intelligence as much as your morals.

It is an absurd spectacle when two nations at war with each other both claim that their God is on their side, if they also profess to worship the same God. But if both desired, above all things, to be on the side of their God, the absurdity would vanish and so probably would the war. There is no possible harmony in the conflicting claims of the nations, if each thinks that its claim is just because it is national ; but there might be a harmony if each worshipped a God of justice and forgot itself and its claims in that worship. Individual men can do that already, but hardly nations ; for the national claim is not the selfish claim of one man, and when individuals fight to maintain it, there is, and we cannot deny it, something heroic and unselfish in their sacrifice of their own selves to the national self. And yet the national self remains human and not divine, for it is made up of human individuals and the mass is no more divine or free from human vices than the individuals.

All this does not mean that it is always wrong for a nation to go to war, any more than it is wrong for a man to resist injustice to others or to himself. War is a horrible

method of resistance ; but there may be no other. If you see a man trampling upon a woman, you may walk away or you may knock him down, but it is vain to argue the point with him while he tramples. Those who are for peace at any price are like the man who walks away. They are for peace, not on moral grounds, but so that they and their countrymen may not suffer from war. They have ignored morals just as much as the nation which goes to war so that it may conquer. They are peaceful for the same reasons which make that nation warlike, and they may be wiser, but they are not more virtuous. But if a nation goes to war for a just cause, it still needs to preserve the religious detachment, so that it may not feel the religious emotion either about itself or about the war. A nation fighting bravely in a just cause may be proud of itself, but it must not worship itself. It must be aware of its human imperfection all the while ; it must also be aware that its war is an evil and, if a necessary evil, made necessary by the evil that is in mankind. There are people, not only Germans, who would glorify war, telling us that it is God's will and a means by which He purifies men of their vices ; or, if they use another jargon,

that it is a necessary part of the process of evolution. But we might say of any evil done by man, or of any pestilence caused by man's ignorance and carelessness, that it is the will of God or a part of the process of evolution. Pestilence, like war, provokes heroism, and yet we all know it to be an evil in itself; and so war is an evil in itself because men at war do evil to each other, and it is caused by the evil that is in man, like any single quarrel or murder, not by the good that is in God.

Religion will tell us this, so long as it is pure, so long as we care for some good outside ourselves more than for our own cause or our own country. And, even when the high religious passion is weak in us, we can still use our intelligence to keep it pure. In war we feel the need of a passion to sustain us, a passion of belief in our own cause, of love of our country, of hatred of our enemies. There is in us a strong desire, since we suffer so much from war, to find some compensating joy in war itself. But this joy, when it comes to us, is a poison as well as a stimulant to the mind. It makes us reason wrongly, because it makes us feel wrongly. We accept the warm, comforting emotion greedily as if it were the religious emotion, and it

becomes to us a spurious religious emotion, so that we feel towards that which is evil as if it were good.

Only so can we explain the sophistries about war or the very fact that war still continues. If all nations had the courage to wage it sadly they would not wage it at all. If they saw it, at best, as a necessary evil distracting them from their pure desire for what is good, it would cease to be necessary. When it is necessary, it is so only because some one nation must be withstood, to which war has ceased to be an evil at all. But the nation withstanding it must wage war sadly, if its cause is to remain entirely just. It must not for a moment believe any sophistry about war so that it may make war with a will. We say now that we are making war against war. Each one of us can tell whether that is true of himself by his own feelings about the war. If he takes a joy in it, it is not altogether true, and there is that in his mind which makes for future war, not for future peace. It is natural enough that we should long to beat the Germans, that we should exult in the thought of the triumph of England. But, if we do that, let us be honest with ourselves and know that we are indulging

the natural unregenerate man in us. Above all, let us not call upon our God to bless that natural, unregenerate man ; for, if we do that, we are remaking Him in our own image to suit our own purposes. In demanding that He shall love us we are losing our pure disinterested love for Him.

VII

CHRISTIANS, AWAKE!

THE Christmas of 1914 will be remembered, we may hope, in happier ages to be, as more than an anniversary of the first Christmas, as the moment at which the old faith was born again in the darkness and became, not a dotard, but a child. While we at home were thinking how all the words of Christmas were a mockery that we dared not utter, the words became facts in the very place where the old heathen gods seemed to have established their kingdom.

> This is the dark Immortal's hour;
> His victory, whoever fail;
> His prophets have not lost their power:
> Cæsar and Attila prevail.
> These are your legions still, proud Ghosts,
> These myriad embattled hosts.

So the poet has written with a natural despair, and the hosts themselves have

answered him. Or rather something in them awakened by the ancient anniversary, something stronger than all their discipline, has answered him, as if it were the answer of a power that did not need to strive or cry. We have all read what happened between those opposing armies, and how it came unexpected, undesigned, and yet willed with all the unconscious force of their natures. Not once or twice but again and again we hear of this sudden change upon the night of Christmas Eve, how there was singing upon one side answered by the other, and how the men rose and advanced to meet each other as if they had been released from a spell. Every one who tells of it speaks also of his own wonder as if he had seen a miracle ; and some say that the darkness became strange and beautiful with lights as well as music, as if the armies had been gathered together there not for war but for the Christmas feast. Our men, as if from mere habit, began to sing, " Christians, awake ! " and then the Christian did awake in English and in Germans, and they were no longer German or English to each other, but men. It was not done by an effort or with fear and suspicion and awkwardness. It happened as if it were a change of weather,

the sun coming out after a storm ; and when it happened it seemed more natural even than wonderful. What was unnatural was the former state of war in which men had been to each other not men but targets ; and now they had come to life for each other, and in a moment they were friends.

We always talk of the natural man as if he were a kind of gorilla, made only more dangerous by his intelligence ; as if nothing were natural to us but the appetites and fears of our bodies, and those habits from a distant past of which we have not yet rid ourselves. But we have also a spiritual nature which is as much nature to us as the flesh, and which has all our permanent desires with it. No one talks of the natural man in himself ; it seems to him predominant in others when he looks at them hostilely and from the outside, when they are not men to him at all but a mob or a foreign nation. So a hostile army seems to consist of natural men, primeval beasts of prey, organized by civilization and with instincts disciplined so that they may the better be gratified. And when the nations think of each other in these terms they make an effort to be themselves what they believe of their enemies, and preach a doctrine of war and the " will to

power" which, if it were natural, would hardly need so much preaching and enforcing.

But turn from the armies to the men who compose them, and you will find that the natural man in all of them is not a beast of prey any more than you are one yourself. And this was discovered suddenly by our soldiers on Christmas Day, and by the German soldiers as well. Both threw off all the artifice of war as if it were a game they were tired of playing. Both saw that the enmity, by reason of which they had been killing each other, was no more part of their natural lives than sentry-go or standing up to their waists in the mud of trenches. "I believe," one officer has written, "that the war will come to an end because every one will get fed up and refuse to go on shooting;" and that would happen if the natural man could assert himself suddenly and simultaneously in all as he did for a few hours on Christmas Day. We hear about the hymns of hate which non-combatants compose in Germany, and they talk of their hatred for England as a profound and mystical instinct of their sacred German souls; but what became of this distrust when the simple, kindly Saxons sang their hymns,

not of hatred, on Christmas Day, and when they met simple, kindly Englishmen face to face and talked with them and saw, in a moment of inspired intimacy, that they too were weary of hatred and slaughter and desired friendship and peace as men desire health when they are sick?

If we, non-combatants, talked of the war like that officer we should be called cowards or sentimentalists. It would be said that we were trying to discourage recruiting, that we, in the safety of our studies, were pretending that all our soldiers' courage and self-sacrifice were mere foolishness; that it was easy for us not to hate the Germans whose wickedness we had never seen. But now our soldiers, who are not in armchairs and who have seen the wickedness of the Germans, yet refuse to hate them; and is there any reason why we should be more irreconcilable than the men who are fighting for us and who know our enemies better than we do? We have a suspicion that the author of the famous Hymn of Hatred wrote it in an armchair and that, as he wrote, he was thinking more of the splendour of his own emotions than of any facts about the English known to him. But the men who fight have no time to enjoy the splendour of their

emotions and no need to advertise their patriotism. They know better than we do the danger which England has to face, because they are facing it. They know what they are fighting for, and for that very reason they do not need to nerve themselves with hatred for the fight. For us, in our studies and armchairs, it is a war only between a good cause and a bad one ; but for them, who make the war, it is also a war between men, and their enemies are not, for them, blackened by the darkness of their cause. They see that these German soldiers suffer like themselves ; that in the reality of suffering they are freed from the illusions which sway their rulers ; that they do not glorify war, but desire peace and friendship, and would at one word of command forget all the nonsense they have been taught about the destiny of Germany and enjoy the peace and friendship they desire.

That word will not be spoken yet. The Christmas truce was only a prophecy of what will be when men have learnt wisdom from their own hearts. But meanwhile we need not refuse the lesson which our own soldiers teach us. For them the Germans are under a spell which was broken for a little while by the Christmas miracle. For

all of them it was not broken, and the Saxons warned our men, if there were Prussians near, not to expect a truce with them. But to Saxons and English alike these Prussians were absurd automatons that could not come to life. They were not devils, but forlorn, rigid, marching figures, committing crimes by rule and, for the sake of their abstract Prussia, cutting themselves off from all the concrete joy and wisdom of life. The poor Prussian thinks that if only he is brutal enough he will cease to be ridiculous ; but he is ridiculous because he is brutal, because he persists in worshipping his own old savage gods when all the rest of us know that they are only wooden idols. No amount of scientific jargon can conceal the fact that his idolatry is obsolete, and we will not allow him, by his misdeeds, to throw us into a state of mind like his own. His ambition is to Prussianize the world, but if he did that the world would take a Prussian revenge upon him, and he would be destroyed by the monster of his own creation. But when will Germany cease to be a monster of his creation? When will she regain the humanity of those soldiers of hers who made friends with ours on Christmas Day? We cannot tell ; but we can at least refrain from

delaying that time by telling her, and believing ourselves, that she is no longer human to us, that her crimes are inexpiable, and that Europe is committed to an everlasting blood-feud with her. That is not what our soldiers say: they were ready to forgive at the Christmas truce; they sang their hymns of peace, and at the sound of them war seemed unreal, and soldiers were no longer soldiers, but men.

VIII

ON NATIONAL MOODS

THE psychology of the crowd has aroused the curiosity of people who call themselves psychologists, and they have written books about it ; but often they have observed it from the outside as if they were studying the habits of ants or bees. Now we could all know something about it, if only we wished to know ourselves, and something more intimate than any psychologist could tell us. For a nation, when it grows conscious of itself, is a crowd ; and there is nothing that makes a nation so conscious of itself as war and an enemy. So we are all now members of a nation conscious of itself ; and that nation has become for us, and for our enemy, a person. To us it communicates its own moods so that we all, as individuals, share them ; in Germany it arouses counter-moods which the Germans too, as individuals, all share.

It is easy to explain this by saying that, in time of war the instinct of self-preservation becomes collective ; there is a common enemy and a common danger, and these unite us all in a common effort against them. But this is merely a formula ; it may seem to explain other people to us when we observe them in the mass, but it does not satisfy us as an explanation of ourselves. It does not tell us how the emotional contagion works upon us, or why this instinct of self-preservation, which we do not value much in ourselves as individuals, has for us so much emotional value when it becomes collective.

Here is a force which always seems glorious to those who are carried away by it ; but which, like any other force, is not to be admired merely because of its strength. The Germans at the present time are carried away by it too, and they are convinced of its glory in themselves, but not of its glory in us. On the contrary that England which is a person to them as to us is to them villainous, with all the meanest vices of the individual ; and we, if we can regard Germany with more philosophic calm, see her as a person possessed by dangerous delusions, as an irritable egotist, almost a lunatic suffering from persecution mania.

Indeed, some of her most eminent men talk about her as only a man with persecution mania would talk about himself. There is Professor Harnack, for instance, who cries :— "The chain of evidence is complete and the treacherous plot of Great Britain revealed." But what evidence and what plot? It is the language of obsession used by a sane and honest man to whom Germany has become an angel and England a villain. We know what scrupulous criticism he would apply to his own feelings and his own relations with another individual ; but he has none at all for his feelings about Germany, those feelings which he has caught from the nation of which he himself is a part. In all the manifestoes of eminent Germans we find the same mood ; they almost use the same language, as if it were always one person speaking and expressing the same obsession ; and we see clearly that this mood is not admirable merely because a whole nation is possessed by it, nor even because it moves all the individuals of that nation to self-sacrifice. It is, in fact, a mood to be judged in the nation just as it would be judged in an individual ; and when two nations become possessed by moods of antagonism to each other, they also are to

be judged as if they were individuals, and will be so judged by posterity.

Further, a national mood by reason of its very intensity may be a national danger, just as in an individual it would be a danger to him. If it is the instinct of self-preservation that drives nations to such excesses, that instinct, freed from self-criticism, must work against itself. A lunatic, in the terrors of persecution mania, may throw himself out of window ; and a nation, though composed of sane individuals, may rush to self-destruction like a lunatic, and for the same reason. This collective madness overpowers individual sanity ; it does not make Professor Harnack and the rest merely silent from despair of reasoning with it, it makes them talk its own language, as if they had become its mouthpieces and all their personal wisdom were changed into its folly.

Clearly, then, we have to consider these national moods coldly, if we are to understand anything about them, and as coldly when we feel them in ourselves as when we observe them in the Germans. If the nation becomes a person, it must be judged as a person even by those who compose it, and judged by those standards of right and wrong which we apply to ourselves when we are at our best. There

are men who feel that all their own instincts are righteous, who use their reason only to persuade themselves that they are right to do what they wish to do ; but they are not judged by others as they judge themselves ; and this use of reason does not give them self-knowledge. It is indeed merely imitative, and they would never employ their reason thus wrongly if others had not employed it rightly before them. We attain to self-knowledge, and to self-control, by a detached scientific interest in ourselves ; and we need to take this interest in our national moods no less than in our personal, valuing the national mood because of its mere intensity no more than we value the personal mood for the same reason.

We all know how we tend to value a personal mood for its intensity ; to admire ourselves when we are strongly moved, without asking why. A man feels heroic when he is in a passion, but when he grows calm again he sees that he was not heroic merely because he was ready to knock some one down or to beat his own head against the wall. So it is with a nation ; like an individual it may attain to unity through the violence of its passions and feel that the unity is heroic. For it is the unity produced by passion that makes us value it ; and yet it is a low unity like that produced

by appetite. The flesh masters the spirit, and not the spirit the flesh. And in a national unity, which seems so heroic to the whole nation because it is national and not individual, there may be a supremacy of mere instinct ; as we believe there now is among the Germans.

Man is half solitary and half a pack-animal ; and at different times he is one or the other. That is where he has a superiority over other animals ; and in spirit, too, he is lonely or sociable, with his private prayer and ritual of common worship, with his poetry and his orchestras and choirs. But, because of this power of variation both instinctive and spiritual, men are apt to mistake an instinctive concord for a spiritual, to feel a spiritual freedom in a common purpose that is really animal. This purpose gives them unity, not only in themselves but with others. They do love each other better because of it and forgo all their petty discords. Instead of the I, which is plainly not worth sinning for, there is the nation, with its past and future, which seems to justify every sin. But it does not ; for the glory of its past is not animal and cannot be maintained into the present and future by any animal ambitions. The people who are arrogantly

proud of their country are not like those who have given them reason to be proud of it. They may march to a tune made by one of the sons of light, but they do not know what he meant by it ; and they go into battle, not for anything that he loved, but like a pack of wolves hurling themselves upon another pack.

The Germans seem to be by nature more pack-animals than the other nations of Europe, more liable to mistake a collective instinct for a spiritual unity. There is something of the pack in their very intellect, in their organized research, in their readiness to submit to theories as if they were facts observed by themselves ; and music, the art in which they excel, is the one which most needs discipline and obedient executants. It is natural that they should find the glory of the orchestra in the army, no matter what cause it may be fighting for ; natural, too, that they should accept theories wholesale which flatter their collective instincts. For years they have all been saying the same things about Germany and her virtues and rights ; and they have yearly grown more and more impatient because other nations did not believe what they said so often and so unanimously. They had had a sudden and great national

success in war and in commerce, and this seemed to them to prove that there was some peculiar magic in them. Yet it had no magical effects. The world did not reverence Germans any more than other men, and it would not let Germany have her way just because she was Germany. The individual German dazzled no one ; he went about the world feeling that he carried the magic of Germany with him ; and yet that magic did not act. So he came to believe that there was a conspiracy against Germany in the indifference of the other nations ; and all individual Germans eager for the millennium of German glory fell into the national mood. "In its endeavour to unite itself with the world," says one of their writers, "the German soul had suddenly come upon the wildest hatred." "Has the world gone mad," the same writer cries, "that it has ceased to believe in our sincerity?" There is a real anguish in this, the anguish of a German who cannot persuade us all that Germany is what she believes herself to be. In Germany itself there was nothing to check the mood, not even the instinctive perversity of Frenchmen or Englishmen who like to contradict what they hear too often ; and so the mood grew and the desire for the millennium

increased, and with it impatience of every nation that did not desire it. Meanwhile we other nations went on as we have always done, a little jealous of each other and apt to haggle and compete ; conscious of certain national discords, but aware also that there must be give-and-take between the nations. We did not know of this mood that was mastering Germany from her Kaiser downwards, or how all the rest of us seemed to her to grow more obstinate and hostile every year until she despaired of convincing us of her virtue by any means except war.

That is the mood of Germany ; and it ought to excite the passionate curiosity of the psychologist. His business is not to be angry or frightened, but to make use of an opportunity which, we may hope, will not come again for many generations. He may seem to some of us aloof and unpractical, but the man of science is working for the future who studies the causes of a plague while it is raging. We are all talking even now of the secure peace that we hope to make after the war ; but no peace will be secure unless nations learn to be on their guard against certain national moods, as against pestilence. In every nation there are the possibilities of the German madness ;

all nations have shown symptoms of it from time to time. The Germans have used all their science to make themselves more mad ; in the future science, if it is not to be discredited, must be used to make us all more sane.

IX

MOURNERS AND THE DEAD

REALITY, when it happens, is never like the remembrance or shadow of it in history and romance ; for in these we see it as if it had happened to someone else, not to ourselves. So, even now, the grief for a husband or brother or son lost in battle seems to us beautiful like sad music, when it is not our grief ; but, to those who suffer, it is not music, but pain. We see them as figures in this great moment of history at one with all those who in the past have mourned glorious deaths. But they do not see themselves at all ; they see only their loss, which to them is not general but particular ; not the loss of a hero, but of this one husband or brother or son, who is gone, and nothing can take his place for them. No one else can know what was the feeling between them when he was alive, or what is the loss of that feeling now that he is dead. The word grief is only a word,

meaning what is common to all grief, what we remember or believe about it ; and there is no word for the particular grief that any one is suffering. So words of consolation can address themselves only to what is common ; and that to the sufferer is nothing. The pain is his, or hers, alone, as the love, whose place it has taken, was his or hers alone ; and it is vain to offer consolation or to repeat the generalities, even as the poets have said them, which are supposed to make mourners think of other things than their grief :—

> Art and eloquence,
> And all the shows o' the world are frail and vain
> To weep a loss that turns their lights to shade.

There is a time for all things ; and a time when those who have loved wish for nothing but pain ; they would not have it numbed if they could, lest it should seem to them that their love was weaker than they had thought it.

In all moments of extreme joy and grief we feel that we have found reality, and we are impatient of the words of those who seem to us to be still lost in a vain routine. If they talk to us of our joy or grief, what can they, who do not experience it, know about

it? They are living among half-sorrows or joys, which concern only part of their minds, and to which the rest is hostile or indifferent. They remain expectant or anxious about something that is not yet fulfilled, about a hundred things which draw them this way or that. But a grief to which the whole mind consents, as if it were the love whose place it has filled,—that is secure beyond anxiety or expectation. Those who suffer it are at one with themselves, as we never are in our ordinary life when we half accept this experience and half refuse that; and, being at one with themselves, they know that whole life which we all desire blindly when we are only half living. So the words "Blessed are they that mourn," are truer than we think when we only accept them because of Him who said them. They are blessed because they consent altogether to their grief and live wholly, though it be a life of pain.

So we may even envy mourners for the pain in which they live, and which tells them what life is. We do not know what it is when we are not living it; and we listen to theories about it made by those who are not living any more fully than ourselves. They talk to us about the struggle for life, that

phrase which expresses all the futility of life when the self, being concerned with itself, is not itself : when it is not living, but only trying to live. For this concern with self there is no remedy in self and no answer to the questions which it raises. Something must happen to make us forget ourselves before we can learn wisdom. And therefore, Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted ; not with the comfort that we would offer them, who have not attained to their sorrow, but with a comfort that shall come of that attainment, when the sorrow is a memory that has done its part in the making of their life and of what it means to them.

So they live on ; but the others are dead who gave their lives—for what? For a country and a cause, but also for something beyond these ; though these, being in danger, were the occasion of their sacrifice. Men who offer their lives do so because they believe there is something which matters more than life, and would prove their belief in act as well as in thought or word. The country and the cause are shadows of this something ; Heaven itself is a symbol of it ; and we can only express it in vague phrases from which all the passion and beauty of the reality are

lost. It is a belief in a significance of life beyond the individual life itself, in a purpose which makes men one, not in a futility that divides them. This is not a certainty for any man, it is never more than a strong hope ; and because it is not a certainty men are eager to pledge themselves for it, to show how they will throw themselves away on the chance of it.

They are ready to rush out of this world which contains all that they know of love or delight—and into what? If they knew that, knew for certain that love and delight here were only the shadow of a reality that awaits them, then there would be no glory in their willing death. They may believe, but even the firmest believers do not know ; and those who profess not to believe at all are just as ready for the adventure. For this belief in the significance of life, and the value of one man's death to the life of all, is deeper than any answer a man's reason may give to the questions which he asks himself. Such answers are made by his reason alone ; but the belief, or the will to believe, belongs to the whole of his nature. It grows with experience, and is strongest in those who experience life best. Doubt is often a brave asceticism of the mind. It will not enjoy

more faith than it has earned ; and there is no way of earning faith except by acting upon it before it comes. So brave men rush into death like moths into the flame of a candle, and some of them seem to themselves like moths, drawn by the irresistible glory of death. There is nothing that they believe in except the glory of a death suffered for others ; and that is not a belief so much as a force which draws them, and to which they consent with their whole mind, as we consent to all the nobler passions, without knowing why.

Germans consent to it as well as Englishmen or Frenchmen ; for they are men like ourselves, and they too, beyond the difference of cause and country, share with us the belief in the glory of a death suffered for others. It is a wonder to us that they should be so ready to die for such a cause ; and sometimes it makes us despair of human reason, as if that were only an illusion by which warring instincts try to justify themselves. But we know that it is something beyond a warring instinct that makes our men face death ; and if we were mourning for dead Germans, we should know it of them also. If we could see them lying on the field of battle with our own dead, all moths drawn

to the same flame, we should make no distinction of honour between them. And it is the usage of war to make none, to bury an enemy with the military honours due to a friend. That is because soldiers recognize that death in battle is not only death for a country or a cause which may be opposite to their own. It is death for that belief in the significance of life which is shared by all brave men. It is their common defiance to the fear of futility which haunts us all, unless we are ready to live, and also to die, as if it did not exist.

It does exist, and we can never quite escape from it or from the questions that it will ask suddenly like a mocking devil, at the very height of exultation. Those values that we put upon noble things, instinctive as our appetites and stronger than they because the whole mind consents to them, what do we know about them except that they are values and stronger even than the fear of death? But, then, what do we know against them? We know nothing for certain ; and that is the condition of our lives in this world, the only condition upon which all our value of noble things is founded. If we knew what surrounds us in infinity or awaits us in eternity, there would be nothing for us but

calculation ; there would not even be faith, for faith is faith because of its incessant adversary, doubt. Men would throw their lives away for a certain better life, or they would not throw them away at all ; and there would be no mourning or only mourning without virtue or significance like a noise of physical pain. But now we value willing death because no man knows what comes after it ; and the mourners themselves value it and consent to their loss and all the tears they shed. In their mourning there is that utter consent with which those for whom they mourn gave up their lives ; and in that consent they live completely as the others lived in the moment of sacrifice. They have faith and it means pain to them as it meant death to those others, because faith cannot exist without its adversary. But mankind value the pain, like the death ; and pay their homage to both in the music and the poetry they make about them, in which there is a beauty of more utter consent and exaltation than in any music or poetry made about life and its delights.

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN
BY UNWIN BROTHERS, LIMITED
PRINTERS, WOKING AND LONDON

UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY
A 000 060 912 3

RECENTLY PUBLISHED

REMEMBER LOUVAIN!
A Little Book of Liberty and War. Selected by E. V. LUCAS. Fcap. 8vo. 1s. net.

THOUGHTS ON THE WAR.
By A. CLUTTON-BROCK. Fcap. 8vo. 1s. net. *Sixth Edition.*

THE NEW (GERMAN) TESTAMENT.
By ANTHONY HOPE. 3d. net. *Third Edition.*

Cloth. Fcap. 8vo. 1s. net each

FIRST LESSONS IN WAR.
By SPENSER WILKINSON. *Third Edition.*

THE KAISER (1859-1914).
By STANLEY SHAW, LL.D., Trinity College, Dublin.

HOME LIFE IN GERMANY.
By Mrs. ALFRED SIDGWICK. *A New and Cheaper Edition.*

THE BELGIANS AT HOME.
By CLIVE HOLLAND. *A New and Cheaper Edition.*

SWOLLEN-HEADED WILLIAM.
(After the German!) Verses adapted by E. V. LUCAS. Pictures adapted by GEORGE MORROW. Fcap. 4to. 1s. net. *Sixtieth Thousand.*

LETTERS TO AN OLD GARIBALDIAN.
By G. K. CHESTERTON. Crown 8vo. 3d. net.

RECESSIONAL.
By RUDYARD KIPLING. Fcap. 8vo. 4 pp. 1d., and Crown 8vo leaflet, 2s. 6d. net per 100. Also on hanging card, 3d. net, and an Edition illuminated in Colour by H. WRIGHT, fcap. 4to, 1s. net.

THE SERVICE KIPLING

2s. 6d. net each volume.

BARRACK ROOM BALLADS.	*Two volumes.*
THE SEVEN SEAS.	*Two volumes.*
THE FIVE NATIONS.	*Two volumes.*
DEPARTMENTAL DITTIES.	*Two volumes.*